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# Crossroads



Vol. 17, No. 12 March 23, 2012

Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal

## Force Protection



Current FPCON: Alpha  
Threat Level: Low

**"6-5...  
IN THE FIGHT!"  
FY 2012**

 **498  
SORTIES**

**8,846  
LODGED** 

**2,5 M  
gallons  
FUEL ISSUED** 

In a real-world  
emergency, call the  
Public Affairs Straight  
Talk Line, **535-3542**.

Don't drink and drive; call  
LADD: 295 57 LADD

### Medical Appointment:

Base: 535-3261  
Off base: 295-573-261  
**Emergency:**  
Base: 911  
Off base: 295-571-911

### Weekend Weather Forecast (21st Operational Weather Squadron)

**Saturday (a.m. / p.m.)**  
Mostly Cloudy / Partly Cloudy  
Wind W 20 / 30 mph  
SW 15 / 20mph

HIGH 16C / 61F  
LOW 12C / 54F

**Sunday (a.m. / p.m.)**  
Mostly Cloudy / Rain  
Wind S 15 / 20 mph  
S 15 / 20 mph  
HIGH 17C / 63F  
LOW 17C / 63F

## Lajes' own selected for commission

By Staff Sgt. Erica Horner  
65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

Every year the Air Force selects the top enlisted members to attend Officer Training School, as well as Commissioned Officer Training for chaplains, lawyers, and medical personnel.

This year a technical sergeant from the 65th Medical Support Squadron at Lajes Field was selected to attend COT.

After waiting six months from the time she submitted her package, Tech. Sgt. Lenita Robinson, NCOIC of Laboratory Services, was notified Feb. 8 that she is one of only seven enlisted members selected to be commissioned as a U.S. Air Force Laboratory officer.

"I feel very blessed and grateful for being selected," said Robinson. "I was excited and had an overall deep appreciation for all of the people who have supported me and pushed me throughout this process, and my career."

Since she joined the Air Force, Robinson has had the desire to become an officer, and if you take a look back at her career, she has done a tremendous amount of work to get to this point.

As a single mother of two boys, Amariae, 14, and, Alijah, 7, Robinson was awarded the Air Force Special Operations Command Medical Laboratory Technician of the Year award for 2002, was a Distinguished Graduate in Airmen Leadership School, and has deployed twice--once to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, and another to an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia.

She also completed her bachelor's degree in Health Sciences, with a major in Medical Laboratory Technology, and attained her American Society of Clinical Pathologists national certification as a Medical Laboratory Technician and as a Medical Laboratory Scientist.

"This is a 'win-win' scenario for both Tech. Sgt.

Robinson and the U.S. Air Force," said Maj. Anthony Caruso, Medical Diagnostics and Therapeutics flight commander. "She has certainly earned the honor of being selected; she has the professional qualities--knowledge and experience--and compassion (patient care is number one) to become a superior officer," he said.

As one can see, the process to become an officer

is no easy task. One of the basic requirements to become a laboratory officer is to have a bachelor's degree and a national certification.

While most officers are fairly interchangeable, and can move from office to office, Biomedical Science Corps officers work only in their specialty.

To many, this would seem like a monotonous task, but not to Robinson: "I don't mind the BSC being specialized,

because I enjoy the laboratory career field."

The selection process for COT typically takes place annually, but this was the first selection board held since 2009. Although the process is lengthy, Robinson has some encouraging words for those wanting to submit a package for OTS or COT...

"I would say do it! You don't want to have any regrets, and the worse they can say is 'no.'"

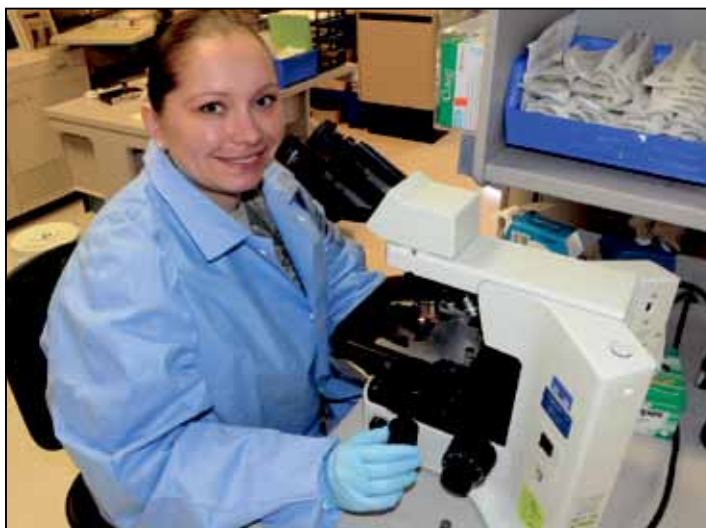
And according to Caruso, he's not surprised at all the Air Force said 'yes.'

"The Air Force is retaining a fully-trained medical professional who already understands customs and courtesies, proper uniform wear, and the Air Force Core Values," he said.

He also mentioned Robinson is currently enrolled in her last two courses to earn a Master's degree in Public Health.

"I am so proud of Tech. Sgt. Robinson being chosen to attend COT!" said Caruso.

Although it was challenging to get where she is, Robinson's efforts paid off, and the Air Force will be better because of it.



Tech. Sgt. Lenita Robinson, 65th Medical Support Squadron, NCOIC of Laboratory Services, was recently selected to be commissioned as a U.S. Air Force Laboratory officer. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Erica Horner)

## Meet MSgt Michael Stine 65th Medical Group First Sergeant

### What motivated you to join the AF?

I had a distinct advantage over most recruits in that my older brother, Dan, joined a year before me. He saw that I was conflicted with my post-high school options and suggested I check into a career in the Air Force. He's now a chief in the Air Guard on the east coast. I joined the Air Force because I wanted to travel the world. My career has surpassed any and all expectations I had when I first enlisted.

### What was your previous assignment?

I was a first sergeant for three years at Tinker AFB, Okla.

### What's your hometown?

San Bruno, Calif.

### How many members are in your immediate family?

My older brother, Dan (mentioned above), younger sister, Sandy, (she also did four years in the Air Force), Dad--Bob Stine--lives in San Mateo, Calif., Mom--Bonnie Rohman--lives in Sacramento, Calif.

### What's an aspect about working in the medical field you think would be interesting for people to know?

I'm new to the "medical" arena. You never know where you're going to work as a first sergeant. I'm quickly learning how critical patient feedback and customer care really are. I have the luxury and privilege of working with the most compassionate and caring medical providers the Air Force has to offer.

### Could you list one or two main highlights of your career?

Flying mach speed in a fighter jet (F-111F) during an incentive ride through the canyons in New Mexico. During my deployment to the Middle East with my AWACS squadron, I was allowed to fly with the crew on an Iron Falcon mission.

### Thus far, how would you say Lajes differs from other bases to which you've been assigned?

The reception upon arrival to this base was incredible. I love the close-knit, family feeling of Lajes. I've felt more welcomed here than any of my previous assignments.

### What's one piece of advice you could give to young Airmen?

Find a mentor as early in your career as possible. Someone you admire, and someone you can learn from. Mine was Master Sgt. James Pruin (now a retired chief). He helped me develop my work ethic, and I've always strived to emulate his caring, committed approach to leadership.

### Are there any particular quotes you live by?

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."--Ralph Waldo Emerson



### Commander's Action Line

535-4240

65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil

The Commander's Action Line is your link to the commander for suggestions, kudos and as a way to work problems or issues within the 65th Air Base Wing for which you can't find another solution.

Your chain of command should always be your first option -- but when that's not the answer,

call or e-mail the Commander's Action Line at 535-4240 or 65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil.



Col. Jose Rivera

Col. Jose Rivera  
Commander, 65th Air Base Wing



The 65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs staff prepares all editorial content in the Crossroads.

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## 6th grade student wins Women's History Month essay contest

By Alexis Callaway

Lajes E/HS 6th grade student

Women used to be seen as only able to work at home and care for children. But not all women thought that way. I found four women who have made a difference in the world, and here they are in no particular order.

In her early life, Madonna, then known as Louis Cicconi, worked as a waitress, then went to New York to learn modern dance. Throughout her career, Madonna has courted controversy for her religious imagery. Her attitudes sparked criticism from the Vatican who discouraged people from attending her concerts. Madonna, generally, remained unapologetic and continued to perform her routines. Ha! Look where she is now!

In her early days, Billie Jean King was particularly critical of the U.S. tennis authorities. She didn't like their promotion of shamateurism, meaning someone who is an amateur, but takes payment. Because of her efforts related to improving tennis, she was ranked No. 5 on Sport Illustrated's "Top 40 Athletes" list for significantly altering or elevating sports the last four decades (1994). Amazing!

It is predicted that around the time Mother Teresa was 14 or 15, she felt she had to help the poor, and was willing to do so. When she

was 18, she was allowed to join nuns in Ireland. After a few months of training, Mother Teresa traveled to Calcutta, India, where she took a vow to become a nun. Mother Teresa spent most of her life in Calcutta, helping and teaching the poor. When she was awarded the Nobel Prize "for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress, which also constitutes a threat to peace," she requested the \$6,000 be given to the poor in Calcutta. She was a living saint, and an amazing example.

Even though she was young, Anne Frank tells a powerful story about how innocent people suffer for nothing. In her diary, she tells of the difficulties living as if one never existed, hidden from the rest of the world. She explains how she wished to be able to ride a bike, dance, and whistle... to be free and show it. Anne was sent to a concentration camp where she died of a fever, one month before the camp was destroyed by advancing allied armies. When her father, the last of the Frank family, found Anne's diary, he tried to get it published. Diary of Anne Frank, originally Diary of A Young Girl, was published in 1947.

All I have written goes to show that women--athletic, musical, etc.-can make a difference. It doesn't matter how big or small it is, but somewhere, a woman's act can have a huge impact on the world. So the next time you see a girl doing something, think about how it could impact someone on the other side of the world!

## Lajes spouse showcases art in local community

By Staff Sgt. Angelique N. Smythe

65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

[www.nakedcarlyart.wordpress.com](http://www.nakedcarlyart.wordpress.com). "I was impressed by the length of time most people spent looking at the details of each work and I did my best to answer any questions about themes, technique or images

In a blog entry dated March 12, 2012, mixed media artist Carly Swenson, and wife of Tech. Sgt. Casey McKinney, 65th Logistics Readiness Squadron, wrote,

"Last Saturday night was the opening for my Momentary Visual Autobiography mixed media exhibition. I was very excited, but also incredibly nervous. As I changed clothes at least six times, (and my husband patiently waited on the sofa for me to eventually decide what to wear) my mind reeled with all the incessantly absurd ideas of what could possibly go wrong—What if no one comes? What if nobody likes my work? What if I appear unprofessional? What if I do something dopey and embarrass myself?"

Just as she freely expressed her deep and honest thoughts, feelings, and fears, Swenson also shared her personal, genuine art with the people of Terceira through her Momentary Visual Autobiography mixed media exhibition, which will be displayed until April 10 at the Youth and Arts Academy in Praia da Vitoria... art she has branded Naked Carly Art.

"My work is really honest; I consider my art very personal and I want to share it with people," she said. "So, I guess conceptually and figuratively, it's naked."

Approximately 50 people attended the opening of her first international exhibition, which featured 15 digital images, 22 works on canvas and a wall of 134 pages of art. So far, Swenson has sold four pieces from this collection of her artwork.

"I was amazed how interested and encouraging people were about my imagery," she said in her blog on



An art collection by mixed media artist Carly Swenson, Atlantic Island Kennel animal caretaker, and wife of Tech. Sgt. Casey McKinney, 65th Logistics Readiness Squadron, can be seen displayed at the Youth and Arts Academy in Praia da Vitoria from March 10 through April 10. (Photo by Stephanie Grant)

used in my pieces. I also enjoyed listening to others' interpretations of my work."

The opportunity for Swenson's first international solo art show resulted after her landlord's son saw her artwork in her home and introduced her to an art gallery coordinator who took the time to view her personal art studio.

"He really liked my work, and said, 'Yeah, I'd really like to have a show with you. You can have all these screens and these walls and do what you want,'" she said.

With a bachelor of fine arts degree in visual arts and an art history minor from Bemidji State University in Minnesota, Swenson has been pursuing art as a career for approximately four years.

"I've been making art forever," she said. "When you're an artist, you kind of need to develop your own style and specialize in whatever you do. I found that I pretty much like any art technique, so, if I do mixed media, I can kind of do everything I want when I feel like doing it. If I just focus on one thing, such as painting or printmaking, I'll get bored; my heart won't be in it totally. So, this allows me to experiment, play, keep doing and keep learning everything without having to give up another. I've definitely evolved into a style of how I work."

Manuel Martins, 65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs, is a local artist on the island of Terceira. He said he has been involved in art shows since 1971 when he first organized an art group show of Terceira Island fine art artists.

To read more on "Lajes spouse" see page 4

## Lajes Field Elementary/High School New Teacher Spotlight



**Name:** Shannon Luna  
**Hometown:** Palm Desert, Calif.  
**Current Teaching Assignment:** Comp Ed Math Learning-Impaired teacher  
**Expertise:** "I am married with three boys, ages 9, 6 and 3. I have been teaching for 13 years at both the middle school and elementary school level. I love math and have enjoyed teaching independent studies, coaching Math Field Day and Robotics over many years. I am very excited to be here on the island and to join this wonderful school."



**Name:** Sue Spinks  
**Hometown:** Crestline, Calif.  
**Current Teaching Assignment:** Reading Specialist 1st, 2nd and 3rd  
**Expertise:** "I work with children who need a little extra support in the area of reading. I have almost 20 years teaching experience in a wide range of areas and enjoy teaching reading. I am enjoying the island life."



**Name:** Estell R. Hawkins  
**Hometown:** Franklin, La.  
**Current Teaching Assignment:** Middle School Science and Social Studies  
**Expertise:** "I have a BS in Public Health, and MA in Health Administration. Although I'm originally from Louisiana and it's where my original certification was attained in 1997, I've spent the last seven years teaching in Atlanta, Ga. for the Cobb County School District. I'm also certified to teach K-8, am a former first lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserves, and volunteer for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta."



**Name:** Contessa Edwards  
**Hometown:** Chicago, Ill.  
**Current Teaching Assignment:** 1st grade  
**Expertise:** "I have been teaching for six years and love new challenges. I am a graduate of Bethune-Cookman University and am currently working on my MA degree at The University of Oklahoma. I also love spending time with my new daughter, Zhole, husband, Tech. Sgt. Durrell Edwards, and son, JJI!"

### "Lajes spouse" from page 3

"Carly Swenson was a big surprise to me and I may say she is the best I have seen on collages," Martins said. "She masters the design of the art work and incorporates an artistic expression that touches us very deeply."

Originally from Havre, Mont., Swenson works at the Lajes Field Atlantic Island Kennel as an animal caretaker. She has lived on the island of Terceira for approximately one year with her husband, their two dogs and a cat.

A few of her mixed media collages are displayed in the Atlantic Island Kennel, as well as in the Airman and Family Readiness Center here. Just recently, Swenson was mailed a published copy of her friend's

book, *Sometimes Out of Turn* by Ben Westlie, for which she created the cover image.

Next month she will be featured in the Somerset Studio Art Journaling magazine, a national magazine which can be purchased at Barnes & Noble. In a future issue, she will have a published article in the same magazine on styles, techniques and themes of art journaling.

May 14 through 18, Swenson will be teaching a 10-hour workshop on journaling techniques at the Youth and Arts Academy in Praia da Vitoria.

Visit the Top of the Rock Club March 23 during their wine tasting and art exhibition to see a few pieces of her work there as well.

Anyone interested in viewing or purchasing Swenson's art can visit [www.nakedcarlyart.etsy.com](http://www.nakedcarlyart.etsy.com).

## LAJES WARRIORS OF THE WEEK



**Name:** JaVona Tarpley  
**Rank:** Staff Sergeant  
**Unit:** 65th ABW/CCCE  
**Hometown:** Washington, D.C.  
**Duty Title:** Executive Assistant, 65th ABW Command Chief  
**Accomplishments:** Staff Sgt. JaVona Tarpley is responsible for providing administrative assistance to the Wing Command Chief in direct support of Lajes' 2,500 military, civilian, local national and family members. She

composes, reviews and edits executive correspondences, coordinates special projects and programs, and maintains the wing filing system. In doing so, Sergeant Tarpley distributes approved policies and guidance to commanders, group and squadron superintendents and first sergeants. Additionally, she administers the wing's awards and recognition programs to ensure Lajes "A"irmen are recognized. Lastly, she is the Lajes Youth Program cheer team coach for 10 children.



**Name:** Mitchell Mercadal  
**Rank:** Technical Sergeant  
**Unit:** 65th ABW/CCCK  
**Hometown:** Davao City, Philippines  
**Duty Title:** NCOIC, Wing Command Section  
**Accomplishments:** Tech. Sgt. Mitchell Mercadal provides Knowledge Operations Management in support of the Wing Command Section, Wing Staff Agencies, 65th Comptroller Squadron and Command Post.

Sergeant Mercadal is responsible for managing and providing general administrative support for the wing front office, to include calendar scheduling, processing executive correspondence, conducting purchase requisitions and organizing official travel arrangements for the wing and vice commander. This week, Sergeant Mercadal is temporarily performing Commander's Action Group duties, and is responsible for managing the "Fab 5" Lajes briefers, Warrior Welcomes/departures, and higher level awards.





# "6-5...IN THE FIGHT!"

Feature



(Left) Lt. Col. David Scharf, 65th Civil Engineer Squadron commander, speaks at the Lajes Warrior Welcome and Send-Off ceremony to highlight Staff Sgt. Karl Teichmann, 65th Communications Squadron, Master Sgt. Scarlet Williams and Senior Master Sgt. Cesareo Montoya, 65th CES, Senior Airman Marquis Williams, 65th Air Base Wing Command Post, and their family members. (Photo by Lucas Silva)



A Boeing 747 from Evergreen International Airlines landed at Lajes Field, Mar 8, 2012, transporting cargo for the commissary. Evergreen provides freight services for the U.S. military and Postal Service. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)



(Right) Chief Master Sgt. (retired) Cynthia Burney, 65th Force Support Squadron, briefs Lajes military and civilian spouses during the Heart Link Orientation at the Airman and Family Readiness Center March 16. The program provided information on the Air Force's mission, customs, traditions, protocol support services and resources. Free lunch, giveaways, games and a graduation coin were also included. (Photo by Guido Melo)



Col. Jose Rivera, 65th Air Base Wing commander, congratulates Tech. Sgt. TaKisha Ruffin, 65th Medical Support Squadron, who was recently awarded the U.S. Air Forces in Europe Blacks in Government Meritorious Service Award March 21. (Photo by Guido Melo)



## Mark your calendar

### INJURY PREVENTION & PROPER STRETCHING SEMINAR:

March 29, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. in the Fitness Center Aerobics Room. All are welcome. Contact Staff Sgt. Sethan Lowe at [sethan.lowe@lajes.af.mil](mailto:sethan.lowe@lajes.af.mil) to register.

### HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY/DAYS

**OF REMEMBRANCE:** Committee for Holocaust Remembrance Day/Days of Remembrance is seeking volunteers to assist with planned activities from April 15-22; Contact Staff Sgt. Lora Begley at [lora.begley@lajes.af.mil](mailto:lora.begley@lajes.af.mil)

### FREE PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE & CULTURE COURSE:

Learn the basic language and culture of the Azores March 26 to April 10 Monday through Thursday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. To register, email [portugueseculturalcourse@hotmail.com](mailto:portugueseculturalcourse@hotmail.com).



#### AFN Highlights:

You can see these AFN stories and more this week on AFN Atlantic on the following dates (All stories shown at these times: "News Update" at 1827 and 1857, and "Around the Air Force" at 1823.):  
March 23--Kick Butts Day—Seize control against big tobacco. Campaign for tobacco-free kids.  
March 27--Wine Tasting and Art Exhibit—Event showcasing the wine and culture of Terceira Island, and Art of Lajes members.



## Feature

### Phrase of the Week A LESSON IN PORTUGUESE



**ENGLISH:** God bless you!

**PORTUGUESE:** Deus te abençoe!

**PRONUNCIATION:** Day ohsh teh ah ben so!



### Reminder:

**Daylight Savings**  
is Sunday,  
March 25.  
Remember to  
move your clocks  
forward one hour  
the night before,  
Saturday,  
March 24.



## ASK ED

A column that looks at the culture and history of the Azores.

By Eduardo Lima  
Community Relations Advisor



### Portuguese holidays explained

The Azores, as well as mainland Portugal, observe several holidays throughout the year. Below is a list of those holidays and a brief description of their meaning.

**Note:** Although the Portuguese Government has announced the intention to eliminate two religious and two non-religious holidays this year, those dates have not been confirmed to date.

**New Years' Day** – Jan. 1- Religious holiday.

**Mardi Gras** – Variable Tuesday. Not an official holiday, celebrates the Fat Tuesday related with the Mardi Gras tradition on mainland Portugal, Madeira island and the Azores.

**Good Friday** - Variable Friday. Religious holiday observing the death of Jesus Christ.

**Day of Liberty** – April 25. National holiday that commemorates the 25 April 1974 military coup which ended 47 years of right-wing dictatorship in Portugal and restored democracy to the country.

**Day of the Worker (Labor Day)** – May 1. This holiday was first celebrated in Portugal in 1974, and observes the U.S. workers' demonstration in Chicago and Milwaukee on May 1 1886, to reduce the work day down to eight hours.

**Espírito Santo (Holy Ghost) Monday** - Variable Monday. This is the day the Azoreans celebrate the Day of the Azores or Day of Regional Autonomy. The day was picked in observation for the Holy Ghost celebration which is a tradition common to all the nine Azorean islands.

**Day of Portugal** – June 10. Also known as the Day of Camões and the Portuguese communities – Camões was a renowned Portuguese poet who lived in the 16th century and traveled extensively throughout the Far East countries. He is still a symbol of the Portuguese conquers.

**Angra Municipal Holiday** - Day of St. John the Baptist. It is celebrated during the island's largest festival called "Sanjoaninas."

**Corpus Christi** – Variable Thursday. Religious holiday.

**Praia da Vitória Municipal Holiday** – Aug. 11. This date commemorates an important naval battle that took place in Praia bay on 11 Aug. 1829 between two political factions, the Absolutists and the Liberals, ending with the victory of the Liberals. Due to Praia's support to the Liberals' cause the town was added the name "Vitória" (victory) in 1837.

**Assumption Day** – Aug. 15. Religious holiday.

**Founding of the Republic** – Oct. 5. This date commemorates the day the Republican regime was established in Portugal in 1910.

**All Saint's Day** – 1 November. Religious holiday.

**Restoration of Independence** – Dec. 1. The date commemorates the Dec. 1, 1640 revolution that ended 60 years of Spanish occupation of Portugal.

**Immaculate Conception** – Dec. 8. Religious holiday.

**Christmas Day** – Dec. 25. It's also a religious holiday in Portugal.